

LIBRARY OF HEAVEN'S PATH

C1055: Luo Ruoxin's Suggestion



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"Impossible?"

The crowd turned their gazes over.

"Since the Black Sandstorm of Oblivion stands in our path, it is likely that it is a trial that we are supposed undergo. If we do not clear this, we will only be able to loiter around the outskirts of the ancient domain, unable to enter its depths," said Guild Leader Han.

"Un." Hearing his words, Zhang Xuan nodded in agreement.

That was indeed the case.

Through the past experiences, he had come to realize that the ancient domain was built in a way such that only one who had cleared the trial before them could activate the formation that led to the next level. If there was no one among them who could clear the trial, they would be stuck on the spot.

As that was the fundamental design of the ancient domain, there was no way to circumvent the trials through wits.

Not to mention, the person who had designed the ancient domain was most likely Ancient Sage Qiu Wu himself. How could an expert of his caliber possibly leave behind any openings that they would be able to exploit?

Taking a step back, even if there was truly an opening they found that they could exploit, it was more likely that it would be a trap created by Ancient Sage Qiu Wu. For breaking his rules, they might find themselves being placed through an even harsher trial than the one before them.

"Based on the traces, it is certain that Zhang Yinqiu and the others must have stepped through the Black Sandstorm of Oblivion as well. But... how did they do it?" Wu shi surveyed the surroundings for a moment before frowning deeply.

Since the old principal's sword had been found alongside marks of battle in the vicinity, it was apparent that the old principal's expedition team had passed through the area they were in.

But the sandstorm before them was a terrifying existence that could corrode even Spirit pinnacle weapons! How could any cultivators survive within it? Even if one could withstand the sandstorm for a short moment, who could say for sure how far the sandstorm spanned? No matter how he looked it, it seemed like it was nigh impossible to clear this trial!

Paying no heed to the anxiety of the crowd, Zhang Xuan began assessing the sandstorm before him carefully as well.

The Black Sandstorm of Oblivion was similar to the field of lightning that he had encountered before—it was a formation as well. However, just like before, as the area it spanned was simply too big and his cultivation was too low, he was unable to break the formation even with the knowledge of its flaws.

A moment later, he shook his head helplessly as well.

The conclusion that he had come to was the same as Guild Leader Han's. There was no way for them to advance forward other than to brave through the black sandstorm!

While the crowd were conflicted and distressed over their present circumstances, Luo Ruoxin suddenly spoke up.

"Have you all thought about how we encountered quite a few Otherworldly Demons in the previous trial, but here, there is not a single one to be seen? If my conjecture holds true, we could have been heading in the wrong direction all along."

"We have been heading in the wrong direction all along?" asked one of the master teachers, unable to comprehend what Luo Ruoxin was driving at.

"That's right. We have been chasing after the trail left behind by Old Principal Zhang Yinqiu, but... if the Otherworldly Demons are already ahead of us, the trail that we see before us might not necessarily be authentic. If that's the case, shouldn't we search for the Otherworldly Demon's trail instead? There is a good chance that it will be safer that way." Luo Ruoxin presented her analysis.

"That..." The crowd was taken aback by those words.

"Indeed, Luo shi's words make perfect sense!" Zhang Xuan's eyes lit up.

As one of the central goals of their expedition was to find the whereabouts of the old principal and save the other party if he was still alive, they had been on the lookout for the old principal's trail all along, thinking that it would lead them to the old principal. It was a logical deduction, but if the Otherworldly Demons had intentionally scattered the old principal's possessions around to lay a trap for them... they could very well have been headed toward grave danger!

So far, he had managed to tame one and kill seven of the Ten Great Kings of Qingtian Lineage, but the two remaining Upper Five Kings would be far more difficult to defeat. Even though he had missed the most powerful Skyleaf King at the Poison Hall, he had heard that the latter was a true Leaving Aperture realm expert, an existence beyond their current means to deal with.

Typically speaking, after obtaining the map in the Poison Hall, the Skyleaf King should have entered the ancient domain. Yet, he hadn't seen any trace of the other party ever since he entered the ancient domain.

Considering how the Skyleaf King could have dealt with them easily but had yet to do so... Perhaps, by using the map in his hand, the other party had managed to enter the ancient domain before them and was currently ahead of them.

If so, the path that the other party had taken was bound to be the safest!

"Let me take a look..."

Flying into the air, Zhang Xuan began assessing his surroundings carefully with his Eye of Insight.

Previously, he had been too concerned with finding the old principal's trail, so he had not noticed anything else. However, taking a closer look around them, he swiftly found that there were indeed quite a few suspicious details.

A group of Otherworldly Demons had passed through the land they were currently on just a few hours ago.

Zhang Xuan descended to the ground and requested, "Feng Xun, I need to borrow your Undefined Mirror!"

The Otherworldly Demons had intentionally concealed their trail, and due to his lower cultivation, there was a limit to what his Eye of Insight could see as well. He could barely make out that others had passed through the area a few hours ago, but he could not discern for sure the direction they were headed in.

If it was just a few hours, the Undefined Mirror of the Combat Master Hall should still be able to work its wonders.

"Un." Nodding, Feng Xun passed the mirror over and swiftly filled Zhang Xun in on how the mirror should be utilized.

Following Feng Xun's instructions, Zhang Xuan bit his finger and dripped a droplet of blood on the Undefined Mirror.

Weng!

An arrow surfaced in the Undefined Mirror, and after flickering for a brief moment, it pointed toward a certain direction.

After walking in the direction pointed out by the Undefined Mirror for some time, Zhang Xuan suddenly came to a halt. Turning to face the crowd behind him, he said, "The direction pointed out by the Undefined Mirror indicates that they have entered the Black Sandstorm of Oblivion through here."

"They entered through here? Are they unafraid of the might of the sandstorm?" one of the combat masters asked in bewilderment.

"I don't have an answer to that either." Zhang Xuan shook his head.

Through the Undefined Mirror, they could confirm that the Otherworldly Demons did enter the Black Sandstorm of Oblivion through the area.

But after careful examination, Zhang Xuan discerned that the area before him wasn't a location where a flaw of the Black Sandstorm of Oblivion could be found. The sandstorm was still as fearsome as ever, so it was perplexing to him why the Otherworldly Demons would choose to enter from this point.

At that moment, Wu shi stepped forward and said, "Let me give it a try. Perhaps, there might be a hidden passageway amid the fearsome sandstorm."

Guild Leader Han pondered for a moment before nodding in agreement to Wu shi's decision. "Be careful."

What Wu shi had suggested was something that often occurred within formations.

There were many formations where the Life Gate was hidden in the most perilous of locations, unable to be detected through any means except by stepping into it personally.

"Un." Wu shi nodded. Taking a deep breath, he drove his zhenqi, and silver armor gradually materialized around him.

Saint-tier battle technique, Silver Armor of the True Dragon!

It was his strongest defense battle technique, and it granted him an all-around defense as well. As such, it was the ideal shield to fend off the Black Sandstorm of Oblivion.

He took a step in.

Kacha! Kacha! Kacha!

As soon as he stepped into sandstorm, a deafening ruckus reminiscent of a violent storm mercilessly battering a banana tree 1 filled the air.

Barely after taking eight steps forward, Wu shi face paled, and he hurriedly rushed back out. As soon as he left the perimeter of the Black Sandstorm of Oblivion, his zhenqi armor immediately cracked before dissipating entirely. His face was entirely pale, and his footsteps were unstable. He hurriedly sat down to condition himself.

After a moment of recuperation, Wu shi turned the crowd and shook his head. "This won't work at all. Not only is the sandstorm no weaker than where we were previously, it is even stronger! There is no way we can pass through this."

The amount of zhenqi one had to exert to fend off the sandstorm was immense. He could at least enter forty meters deep into the lava, but here, eight steps were already his limit.

"This is bizarre. How did the Otherworldly Demon manage to get in unharmed?" Zhang Xuan frowned.

Even if the Skyleaf King and the Scarletleaf King were the two strongest experts of the Ten Great Kings, surely it should have been beyond their means to step right into the Black Sandstorm of Oblivion without getting injured?

It did not make any sense!

"Perhaps... they used some kind of artifact to ward off the sandstorm!" Guild Leader Han suggested.

"Artifact?"

"Un. As powerful as the sandstorm is, there are still artifacts out there that can fend it off. For one, if we had a Saint high-tier artifact here with us right now, we would be able to run right in without any fear of getting injured," Guild Leader Han said.

The Black Sandstorm of Oblivion was a terrifying existence against Spirit pinnacle and even Saint low-tier artifacts, but even it could do nothing to faze the powerful Saint high-

tier artifacts.

If they had an artifact of that caliber, they would not have needed to bother with finding the Life Gate of the formation at all. They could easily have run right through the sandstorm.

"Saint high-tier artifact... Where are we supposed to find that?" Zhang Xuan frowned.

Despite going through a flawless reforging session, the Golden Origin Cauldron barely met the mark as a Saint intermediate-tier weapon. Given so, it was not too hard to imagine how difficult smithing a Saint high-tier artifact would be. In fact, it could be said that it was an impossible feat for anyone who had not achieved the proficiency equivalent to an 8-star blacksmith!

Luo Ruoxin examined the situation for a moment before saying calmly, "Actually, aside from Saint high-tier artifacts, there are some unique artifacts that might work particularly well against the Black Sandstorm of Oblivion as well. Considering how the sandstorm carries the property of corrosion, it would be hard for most physical artifact to withstand its might. However, it would be a different story for soul-type artifacts. Souls are impervious to the corruption caused by the Black Sandstorm of Oblivion, so through the soul energy that soul-type artifacts emanate, it should be possible to keep the sandstorm at bay."

As one who could very well be the offspring of a Sage Clan, it was not surprising for her to be well-versed in such knowledge.

"Soul-type artifacts? But such artifacts are harder to find than Saint high-tier artifacts," a combat master remarked.

As long as a decently proficient blacksmith had sufficient materials at hand, smithing a Saint high-tier artifact would not be a problem. However, the same could not be said about a soul-type artifact.

Most of the soul-type artifacts in circulation were formed by the workings of nature due to the immense difficulty in smithing them. In fact, blacksmiths who were capable of smithing soul-type artifacts possessed an extremely high standing in society, comparable to an equivalently ranked master teacher or even above that.

"Indeed! It's simply too difficult to find soul-type artifacts. We don't even have a single one of those in our Qingyuan Conferred Empire Master Teacher Pavilion!"

"The same for our Yunxu Master Teacher Academy as well..."

The crowd nodded in agreement.

Even if soul-type artifacts could really be used to fend against the Black Sandstorm of Oblivion, it was still futile if they did not have one in their possession.

"I heard that the Hongyuan royal family has a soul-type plant known as the Bodhi Saint Tree. If only I knew that we would encounter such a trial in the ancient domain, I would have surely borrowed it from them in advance." Mu shi sighed deeply in lamentation.

"How could we have possibly known that there would be so many peculiar formations in the ancient domain?" Wu shi shook his head.

"Actually, that probably wouldn't have worked either. I've heard that the Hongyuan royal family's Bodhi Saint Tree is dying, so it probably wouldn't be strong enough to ward off

the sandstorm either. Besides, it's the very foundation of the strength of their royal family, so there's no way that they would have willingly lent it to us," Wo Tianqiong said.

"Indeed. How could they be willing to lend us something that directly concerns the survival of their monarchy? Unless we were to snatch it forcefully or offer them something equivalent in value to it, there is no way that it would have worked!"

Before the group could finish letting out their regrets, Zhang Xuan suddenly spoke with a dazed look on his face. "What did you say? The Bodhi Saint Tree would work as well?"

"Of course! While it's not a soul-type artifact, it's still a soul-type plant. Naturally, it will still emanate soul energy, thus helping us fend off the Black Sandstorm of Oblivion!" Guild Leader Han replied. He was just about to continue speaking when the young man before him suddenly flicked his hand, and a giant tree appeared on his palm. "Will this work?"

"That is... a whole Bodhi Saint Tree?"

The crowd was dumbfounded.

"Principal Zhang, did you... ransack the Hongyuan royal family?"

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